

Celebrating the Life
of
Commissioner Bessie McDonald

Sunrise
March 10, 1921



Sunset
July 30, 2004

Memorial Service

Thursday, August 5, 2004
1:00 P.M.

Greater Abyssinian Baptist Church
88 Lyons Avenue
Newark, New Jersey 07112

Reverend Allen S. Potts, *Officiating*

Life Salute

Bessie McDonald, daughter of the late William and Charity Barnes was born on March 10, 1921, in Lumberton, N.C. Bessie moved to New Jersey in the late 1920's. In later years she met and married Hosea McDonald. Five children were born to their union. She was a member of Greater Abyssinian Baptist Church under the leadership of Reverend Allen S. Potts.

Bessie was a member of various prestigious organizations and received many plaques, awards, proclamations, resolutions and honors. She was the Honorable Mayor/Senator Sharpe James' Senior Citizen Commissioner. She also sang in Mayor/Senator James' Senior Citizens Choral Group under the direction of Dr. Albert Lewis. On May 18, 2000, Commissioner McDonald was Honorary Senior Citizens Mayor for a day. In 2001, a proclamation was given by Mayor/Senator James in which March 10th was proclaimed to be "Bessie McDonald Day".

Commissioner McDonald was the chair person of the Travel Club and Sergeant of Arms for the Tenant Association in the James C. White Manor where she has lived since the early 1990's. She was a member of the Police Council in the West District, Queen in the Senior Citizens King and Queen Program and member of the Centre on Elizabeth Avenue. She also sang in the Voices of Hope Newark Housing Authority Choir under the direction of Doris Crank.

Commissioner McDonald has appeared on Cable Television and has been a guest on the Kitty Taylor Seniors in Action radio program. On Tuesday, August 3, 2004, Commissioner McDonald was honored by the Newark Police Department with a Community Award.

Bessie leaves to carry on her wisdom, courage and strength, two daughters, Barbara Jenkins, Wake Forest, NC; Evang. Yvonne Blount, Newark, NJ; one son, Hosea McDonald, Montclair, NJ; Three sons-in-law, Alan Jenkins, Wake Forest, NC; Jimmy Brooks, East Orange, NJ; Providence Blount, Union, NJ; one dear sister, Helen Porter, Newark, NJ; one sister-in-law, Salomie Bell Barnes, Newark, NJ; seventeen grandchildren; twenty-three great grandchildren; one great-great grandchild and a host of nieces, nephews, relatives and very special friends. She was preceded in death by her son Anthony McDonald, and daughter Christine Brooks.

Order of Service

Prelude.....Organist

Processional.....Family

Prayer.....Dr. Byron E. Lennon, Sr.
Divinity Missionary Baptist Church

Scripture Reading:

Old TestamentPsalm 23.....First Lady Evang. Bessie Jackson
Sherman Avenue Universal Prayer Band

New Testament ...John 14:1-3Evang. Shan Haskett

Reflections.....Honorable Mayor/Senator Sharpe James
Barbara Jenkins
Evang. Yvonne Blount

Selection

Poem

Reflections

First Lady Margaret Lennon ~ Divinity Missionary Baptist Church

Pastor Bossie Jackson ~ Sherman Avenue Universal Prayer Band

Rev. Levin B. West ~ Grace West Reformed Baptist Church

Solo.....Stephanie Blount

AcknowledgmentsEvang. Lolitha Dennis

Life Salute.....Evang. Bobbie Jackson

Remarks.....Limit 2 minutes please.....

Selection

Celebration of Life MessageRev. Allen S. Potts
Greater Abyssinian Baptist Church

Benediction

Repast immediately following

James C. White Manor

516 Bergen Street ~ Newark, NJ 07108

Acknowledgements

The family of Bessie McDonald wishes to thank ALL who have offered prayer, love, support and well wishes during this time. It has been a source of strength for us to know that the effectual, fervent prayers have availed much.

To Mama, everyone she came in contact with was a person of importance, whether you were living in a homeless shelter or one of the richest people in the world. To her, you were one of God's children and, therefore, you were somebody special. Because we know how she felt about her family and friends and people in general, we won't even try to begin to name you individually. For if we were to leave anyone out, she would be upset and so would we. To those of you who have made contributions, we thank you and God bless you.

To the James C. White Manor family, there is no way we could possibly name you all because we definitely would not want to overlook anyone. Mama loved you all and so do we. To all of her very close friends, loved ones and honorary dignitaries, you may think that Mama was a blessing to you. But most importantly, please know that you were truly a blessing to her and she loved each and every one of you.

We wish to extend a very special heartfelt thank you to The Sherman Avenue Universal Prayer Band Church Family, The Honorable Mayor/Senator Sharpe James, The Newark Municipal Council, Reverend Levin B. West and Associates, Perry Funeral Home, and Reverend Allen S. Potts, for all of your love and support. May God richly bless you all.

Mama will truly be missed by us all. But in her own words and writings, she stated, "I have lived a good and full life. I have seen and done many things. My true Memorial Service was at my 80th birthday celebration." Mama went on to write, "Don't come to my house crying. And, if you're hungry, eat at home!"

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